

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-20 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 19 and 20 are hereby newly added. Support from claims 19 and 20 can clearly be found throughout the Applicant's Specification.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that the Applicant's response has overcome the 35 U.S.C. 112 rejection.

Prior Art Rejections

In the Advisory Action, with respect to the Applicant's argument that Takeo actually teaches away from its combination with Paragois and also teaches away from claim 1, the Examiner's asserts that "this argument has no evidence for support" (Advisory Action).

As discussed previously, Takeo relies on a boundary condition set by a radius R , which necessarily partially overlaps the candidate area due to irregularities at the edge portion, causing some parts of the contour to fall within the radius R and some parts of the contour to fall outside. This designation is important in order to better delineate the statistics used to determine a true abnormality (having low variation) from a false positive (having higher variation). If the inner radius were drawn to completely include the contour, the difference between the variances tend to come close together. In particular, there will be more uniformity in values in the regions delineated by R and the annulus bounded by R and $4R/3$. This makes it more difficult to distinguish a low variation from a high variation, thereby making the detection less accurate rather than more accurate as the Examiner contends. Therefore, Takeo actually teaches away from its combination of Paragois and also teaches away from claim 1.

In view of the above, claim 1 should be patentable. Claims 2-6, 19 and 20 are believed be patentable at least because of their dependency from claim 1. Claims 7 and 9 should be patentable at least for reasons similar to claim 1 because claims 7 and 9 recite features that are similar to those of claim 1. Claims 10-18 are believed to be allowable at least by virtue of their dependencies from the respective independent claims.

Furthermore, with respect to claim 4, Applicant respectfully asserts that the calculation of a maximum value does not teach the recited feature of the extracting of density patterns, which are present within unit pixel groups that constitute the inner/outer outline images and judging which of the density patterns the unite pixel groups of the inner/outline image are similar to. Accordingly, claim 4 is believed to be allowable for this additional reason.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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